THE WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT

Editor - - SYLVIA PANKHURST.

VOL. II.—No. 51. SATURDAY, MARCH 11TH, 1916. PRICE ONE HALFPENNY.

Donations to be sent to Hon. Treasurer, Dr. Tchaykovsky, Langham House, Harrow, or Hon. Financial Sec., Miss N. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

W.S.F. FIXTURES.

Friday, March 10th.

Poplar Women's Hall, 3 p.m., Mrs. McLeod.

Beckton Rd., 6.30 p.m., Mr. Dunstan, Miss Beamish.

Brotherhood Church School Hall, 8 p.m., Public Meeting.

Saturday, March 11th.

Grundy St., 11 a.m., Mrs. Bouvier, Mrs. Drake.

Morpeth St., 11.30 a.m., Miss Lynch.

Procession to Holloway, 4 p.m, from King's Cross Station.

Sunday, March 12th.

Ilford—Joint Meeting, 11.30 a.m., Miss Manicom and others.

Osborne St., 11.30 a.m., Mr. Bracher, Miss Lynch.

Stratford Broadway, 12 noon, Mrs. Bouvier.

Hyde Park, 3 p.m., Miss Rickards.

Bow Women's Hall, 7.30 p.m. (East London Branch of the W.I.L.) Miss Marshall, Mr. Fred Hughes, Mrs. Cressall. Chair: Miss Lynch.

Monday, March 13th.

Custom House, 5 p.m., Mrs. Bouvier, Miss Beamish.

Tuesday, March 14th.

Grundy St., 11 a.m., Miss Lynch, Mrs. Drake.

Copenhagen Place, 11 a.m., Mrs. Bouvier.

Bow Women's Hall, 3 p.m., Mrs. Scurr, Miss Lynch.

Poplar Women's Hall, 8 p.m., Miss Feek, Mrs. Drake.

Wednesday, March 15th.

53 St. Leonard St., 3.30 p.m.

Chrisp St., 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Drake.

Thursday, March 16th.

55 Fife Rd., 3.30 p.m., Mr. Attlee, Mrs. Parsons.

Friday, March 17th.

Poplar Women's Hall, 3 p.m., Mrs. Bouvier, Mrs. Drake.

Beckton Rd., 5.30 p.m., Mrs. Bouvier.

Bow Women's Hall, 8 p.m., Branch Meeting.

Saturday, March 18th.

Grundy Street, 3 p.m., Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Drake.

Vernon Rd., 3 p.m., Miss Lynch, Mrs. Bouvier.

Sunday, March 19th.

Poplar Women's Hall, 7.30 p.m., Mrs. Hercbergova, Mr. Scurr, Mrs. Shlette. Chair: Mrs. Drake.

MOTHERS AND BABIES.

The calls on our four mother and baby centres, for milk, eggs, medicines, and doctoring and nursing care, are still very urgent. Will you help by sending us some money for this work?

Will you send us new laid eggs, arrowroot, barley, glaxo or virol?

We want:—For baby, four gowns, four barrows, two flannel bands, twelve napkins, three vests, and a cot blanket; for mother, two nightgowns, woollen shawl, three towels, two sheets, and a pair of pillow cases.

Mothers and Children should make a point of attending the weekly consultations with nurse and doctor at:—

438 Old Ford Rd., Bow, Mondays 2.30 p.m.; 20 Railway St., Poplar, Tuesdays 3 p.m.; 53 St. Leonard's St., Tuesdays 2 p.m.; 55 Fife Rd., Canning Town, Tuesdays, 4 p.m.

Garments for our Clothing Stalls are much needed, and should be sent to the "Mother's Arms," 438 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

RECRUITING THE WOMEN. DO NOT BE A BLACKLEG!

OUR LETTER TO ASQUITH.

The President of the Board of Trade and the Home Secretary have issued an appeal to employers of labour to replace the labour of men by that of women.

An advisory committee has been appointed:—

1.—To advise the Board of Trade and Home Office on questions arising from time to time out of the measures required to be taken by those Departments, to give practical effect to the policy of his Majesty's Government of extending the employment of women in industrial occupations, so as to enable essential industries to be maintained in spite of the depletion of their supply of male labour by recruiting for war purposes, and

2.—To watch and report from time to time on the progress made in different localities and industries in the extension of the employment of women.

The members of the committee are:—Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, M.P. (Chairman), Miss A. M. Anderson, Mr. W. H. Beveridge, Miss Hilda Cashmore, Mr. D. C. Cummings, Mr. G. W. Currie, M.P., Mr. M. Delevingne, C.B., Miss F. H. Durham, Miss Violet Markham, Mr. J. S. Nicholson, Mr. J. O'Grady, M.P., Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree, and Mr. D. J. Shackleton.

Mr. F. Lavington, of the Board of Trade, and Mr. M. H. Whitelegge, of the Home Office, have been appointed joint secretaries to the committee.

Miss S. Pankhurst has addressed the following letter to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Workers' Suffrage Federation. Letters dealing with the question of the wages and conditions of the women workers, and the composition of the advisory committee, have been sent also to the President of the Board of Education and the Home Secretary:—

SIR,—The joint appeal just issued from the Home Office and the Board of Trade for the extended employment of women in industry, urges employers of labour to do two things:

1.—To review the organisation of his work, in order to ascertain how it is possible, by re-arrangement of work and other measures, profitably to employ, as temporary substitutes, as large a number of women workers as possible.

2.—To send to the local Labour Exchange at once—and from time to time as the situation develops—particulars of his requirements for women's labour, with the fullest possible details as to the classes of work and the qualifications required.

In these instructions and throughout the appeal, no mention occurs of the need for paying women the same wage as the men whom they will be engaged to replace, or even for giving the women a mere living wage. This is a most serious, and dangerous, omission.

The composition of the advisory committee appointed to act in consultation with the Board of Trade, in regard to women's employment, also gives cause for grave dissatisfaction. Only four women have been appointed to this committee of 13. Of the women on the committee, though the work of the committee so vitally concerns women, one is well known to belong to an organisation formed for the purpose of opposing the right of women to a voice in the making of the laws which they are obliged to obey, and not one of the four has any claim to represent the voice of working-class women.

We consider that the auspices and conditions under which large masses of women are now to be attracted into industry, present no guarantee that the women will be fairly treated, either in regard to wages or conditions, and we are conscious of the fact that the matter is serious, not only in regard to the position of the large number of women who will be directly concerned, but also in regard to its effect on the entire labour market, and the rivalry between men and women's labour, which will appear after the war.

The Workers' Suffrage Federation, on whose behalf I write, therefore asks that the Government will receive a deputation from this organisation of working women next week, and we should be glad if you would arrange for this either Thursday or Friday afternoon, March 16th or 17th. I should be greatly obliged if you would telephone to say whether this arrangement is satisfactory to you, or whether you would kindly appoint another time.

The organisation on whose behalf I write is also exceedingly anxious in regard to the report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Disease, in which a number of far-reaching suggestions are made, some of which appear to us to give openings for re-introducing such provisions as those which were contained in the obnoxious C.D. Acts.

We hold that the main cause of prostitution, which is so closely bound up with this question of venereal disease, is the disgraceful, and unfortunately almost universal custom, of employing women at less than a living wage. No laws or social customs for penalising or regulating the women who have become the victims of the social evil chiefly through economic causes, can have any good effect, and no large or permanent remedy will be found until the economic status of the woman worker has been improved.

We trust, therefore, that you will receive a deputation in regard to this question also, as you have pledged yourself to the women's societies not to allow any regulations corresponding to or approaching those of the C.D. Acts, to be introduced in this country. As you are aware, this matter is one which women feel very acutely.—Faithfully yours,

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

WHERE ECONOMY IS IMPOSSIBLE!

PUBLIC MEETING

Brotherhood Church School Hall, SOUTHGATE ROAD.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10th, at 8 p.m.

Speakers:

Mrs. BOYCE, Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST, Mrs. H. M. SWANWICK.

Chair: Rev. F. R. SWAN.

ADMISSION FREE. Doors open 7.30.

PROCESSION to HOLLOWAY, to cheer Mrs. Nellie Best in prison.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11th.

Start from King's Cross at 4 p.m.

MEETING at HOLLOWAY GATES.

Speakers:

Mrs. BOYCE, Mrs. BOUVIER, Mrs. DRAKE, Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST and Mrs. WALKER.

THE ARMLET BRIBE.

The Gloucester Chamber of Agriculture has admitted women to membership (not working women, *of course!*) Lord Selborne, who took the chair, reminded the farmers present that women of the type most needed are able to earn from 2s. to 2s. 6d. a day for charing, and are not likely to go on the land for less. How much less does Lord Selborne think the farmers would care to pay? We must remind him that charwomen get their food for the day in addition to their wage, and we would ask him, and also Lady Selborne, whether he really believes it to be patriotic to suggest that women should do men's work on the land (and in war time too) for such a paltry sum? Other speakers said that it would be unfair to expect farmers to pay "a full standard wage" to women during their training, and urged that the Gloucester Education Committee should make grants of 6s. a week, for not less than four weeks, towards the maintenance of each woman during her training. The Gloucester farmers certainly do not mean the workers to share much of the War profits that are being made by agriculturists!

Women should refuse to be lured into accepting the position of blacklegs by hollow praises about patriotism!

Committee Number—?

A Women's National Land Service Corps has been formed at a meeting at Grosvenor House, the residence of the Duke of Westminster.

Mr. Asquith sent a letter of welcome. Mr. Walter Long was there to give the organisation his blessing, and the Duke of Marlborough, who presided, announced that the President of the Board of Agriculture had

(*Continued on back page, col. 2.*)

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Can be obtained at the Bookstalls of Messrs. W. H. SMITH & SONS & Messrs. WILLING, & all Newsagents.

Annual Subscription: Post free, 4s. 4d.

Vol. II. No. 51—Sat., March 11th, 1916.

Bravely and willingly we bear our share of the World's burdens. Why, then, deny us the right to Vote, which would dignify our labour and increase our Power of Service?

THE WEEK'S RESOLUTIONS.

Pass them at your meetings and send them to the Government and the Press agencies:—

This meeting demands the instant release of Mrs. Nellie Best, who has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment under the Defence of the Realm Act; to be sent to the Home Secretary and Prime Minister.

We demand that State Pensions shall be granted as a right to all men invalided out of the Army and Navy, whether for illness or wounds, and to the dependants of all men who are killed or die of illness, accident or wounds; to be sent to the Prime Minister, Dr. Macnamara and Mr. Forster.

We call on the Government to declare the terms on which it will accept Peace, and to submit international disputes to an International Congress of the Powers; to be sent to the Prime Minister, Sir Edward Grey and Lord Kitchener.

That this meeting demands Human Suffrage, which means a vote for every woman and man over 21; to be sent to the Prime Minister.

THRIFT AND TRADE.

At the Guildhall last Wednesday, Lord Kitchener, who gets a salary of £6,140 besides his private income, Mr. McKenna and Mr. Balfour were preaching thrift to their poorer neighbours. Mr. McKenna said that to the working woman with a large family "who has never before been able to clothe her children properly or to furnish her home," we must say:—"We realise that you are only doing what a good father or a good mother would always wish to do, and we don't ask you to give up your desire to see your children well clothed or your home comfortably furnished. All we ask you is, for the sake of your country and during the war, to postpone the expenditure, keep your money. Money in your hands is capital. That capital is wanted now for the nation, and that capital will be repaid to you with full interest, when you can do all for your family, and more for your family, than you are able to do now."

Mr. McKenna is like the War Office officials who can only think in banking accounts and leave women and children and disabled soldiers to starve whilst months are taken to investigate their claims. The Government must realise that people who live on small weekly wages cannot wait. If the mother does not buy enough nourishing food, the health of the family is impaired and one or more of the children may contract a disease which will lead to death or permanent invalidity. If the husband or wage-earning son or daughter cannot have the new boots or the new overcoat that are overdue, a serious illness may result. The working-class death rate both amongst infants and adults, is far higher than it should be, because short commons are habitual. Mr. McKenna expresses sympathy. We refuse to ask for sympathy, but for the conscription of wealth and we assure Mr. McKenna that the interest on War Loan will not repay a mother for the children she has lost!

The Commercial Ring.

From every part of the Empire comes news that the traders and financiers are making preparations, not to protect the people from tyranny and to enlarge the bounds of popular liberty, but to build up a trade wall, which shall prevent the German trader from competing with the British trader on equal terms. For example: *Reuter's* Calcutta correspondent reports that at the annual meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the chairman stated that German trade could not be entirely prohibited without damaging Indian trade, (otherwise of course no compunction would prevent its being done)

German trade must therefore be carried on by British subjects, and all exports and imports should be carried in British steamers. If Germans were admitted into the country at a later date they should be stringently controlled and specially taxed to meet the cost. They should be registered personally and licensed to trade, and should be prohibited from owning land or establishing banks, companies or factories, or acquiring a controlling interest in these concerns. They should not be allowed to form clubs, associations, or societies.

Such exceedingly coercive regulations remind us of the methods of the middle ages. It is difficult to believe that anyone imagines that they have been devised solely to punish Germany for invading Belgium. To punish by such restrictions individual Germans living in far off India because the German Government ordered the Army to march through Belgium, would be unjust in the extreme. We know however that the regulations were not framed for that reason, but in the interests of rival traders.

It is officially announced that Great Britain and her Allies are to enter into a trade compact, and a conference to decide the details is to be held in Paris. Mr. Asquith has virtually promised a commercial deputation that a Ministry of Commerce is to be established. Mr. McKenna has told delegates from the Chamber of Commerce that the British Government is prepared to give British traders its assistance in ways which cannot yet be disclosed, in order that "those rivals who are now our bitter enemies shall not have the control of foreign trade which they enjoyed in the past."

Let those who will, strive to judge whether it is better that British or German Capitalists should pile up wealth out of the labour of the peoples of Egypt, Morocco or Asia Minor. The decision is one that we do not care to make. We desire instead to see the present iniquitous system of exploitation abolished.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

ANOTHER VICTORY.

The Legislature of Oklahoma, U.S.A., has passed a resolution to submit the question of Votes for Women to the electors of the State in August.

FREEDOM OF THE SEAS.

Humane methods can never be introduced into a thing so inhuman as organised warfare, but it seems to us logical that non-combatants and private property, both at sea and on land, should be respected. It is a war rule that on land civilians should go unarmed and that only the military forces shall be armed. We think that the same rule might well be applied to the merchantmen; they should go their way unarmed and unmolested and the right of capture should be abolished. But in war, no rules are kept and the non-combatants who are supposed to be protected from injury, frequently suffer more than the soldiery. It is said that in the South African War the death rate amongst the soldiers was 4,000, and amongst the Boer women and children 20,000.

- Deal with our Advertisers. -

AUSTRALIA and the TRADE WAR

The Australian Prime Minister, Mr. William Hughes reached Liverpool on March 7th, in response to an invitation of the British Government. Some very inflammatory statements are attributed to him by Press interviewers, which would seem to be at direct variance with Mr. Asquith's Dublin promise of efforts to set up a "European partnership."

Some of the utterances of Mr. Hughes are reported in the *Evening News* as follows:—

"I am not in favour of trade with Germany, during the war, after the war, or at any time."

"If Germany ever gets a foothold in the metal industry of Australia again, it will be because Australians voluntarily surrender themselves to the embraces of the beast."

"We must win or go under, there is no middle course."

"We are going to cut out every trace of the German cancer."

Women's Peace Army's View.

The Women's Peace Army of Australia has written to the Australian Prime Minister as follows:—

Dear Sir,—We send you herewith a copy of the terms which, in the opinion of the International Congress of Women, held at the Hague, April-May, 1915, and of the Women's Peace Army of Australia, should form the basis of a constructive and permanent Peace.

It has seemed incredible to us that our elected representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament should have so far failed in their duty to the people, as to permit you to leave Australia without any instructions as to the desires of the people in regard to Peace, and to the entire Naval and Military obligations of the Commonwealth towards the Imperial Government.

With all courtesy and respect, we consider it is our plain duty to tell you that we, speaking for the great majority of the true democrats of our country, as we know from public meetings, the democratic press, and correspondence, dissociate ourselves entirely from the cruel, relentless, undemocratic, anti-Christian policy of Militarism and Imperialism, which are synonymous terms, to which Australia is being committed by the Government, the Press, and the financiers of the country.

We ask you, Sir, although you will disagree wholly with our view point, to place it and our Peace terms before the Imperial Conference, as representing, if not the majority, at least a very large minority of the people of Australia.—Yours faithfully,

WOMEN'S PEACE ARMY.
(Signed) VIDA GOLDSTEIN, *President.*
(Signed) CECILIA A. JOHN, *Secretary.*
(Signed) ADELA PANKHURST, *Organiser.*

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

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MRS. BEST'S CASE.

The Legal View.

"Section 1 of the Probation of Offenders' Act, 1907, seems rather to have escaped the attention of our magistrates in dealing with persons of good character and transparent honesty who commit nominal offences against the Defence of the Realm Regulations. That section provides for the dismisal of the summons in such cases on the ground that the offence is merely technical, or that there are extenuating circumstances. The case of Commissioner of Police v. Nellie Best (February 26th) illustrates the general tendency to overlook this section. The defendant, who was the secretary of a body opposed to conscription, had published a pamphlet in which she exposed the system of discharging soldiers without pensions, or without adequate pensions, which has been powerfully attacked in the *Times* by Sir Frederick Milner, and admitted in the House of Commons by Ministers. It is true that the defendant used extreme language and gave a rather exaggerated and distorted view of the facts—but this is usual in political controversy. Since the introduction of compulsory service nobody can suppose that many recruits, not liable to conscription, are likely to be obtained by voluntary recruiting. Yet the defendant was convicted of conduct 'calculated to prejudice recruiting,' and sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the first division. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that her real offence in the eyes of both prosecutor and magistrate consisted in opposition to conscription. But the advocacy of anti-conscription views by constitutional means is not an offence; indeed, the Government expressly promised that no one would be prosecuted for attempting to procure the repeal of the Military Service Act by argument as opposed to force. The prosecution of Mrs. Best certainly seems scarcely consistent with the spirit of the pledge; and her sentence is difficult to explain on any recognised principle of penal practice."—*The Law Journal.*

The case brought against a former Socialist labour leader, of Croydon, for making statements prejudicial to recruiting was dismissed.

"Did you say that as long as we keep getting soldiers the longer the war will last?" asked the police superintendent.

"No," said defendant. "But if I had it would be the truth."

At Marlborough Street Police Court on March 7th, Arthur J. Ramsden was sent to prison for six weeks hard labour for "making statements likely to cause disaffection and prejudice recruiting." He had been calling attention to the treatment of disabled soldiers.

PLAIN SPEAKING.

Sir,—I, to-day, received enclosed from Ashcombe Rectory, Dawlish:—

"Our man, aged 36, has had rheumatic fever twice, quinsy twice, and two years ago tubercular abcesses. He also suffers on and off from his heart. I wrote to the examining medical officer, but he passed the man after five minutes' examination."

Let me add a case of a man at my old Yorkshire home. This man has been a hopeless invalid all his life. He was only occasionally able to do a bit of work; his heart very bad. He attested, as he thought it his duty to do so. He has been passed fit for military service. Is it not time this farce should cease? What right have we to waste money on cripples like these, break them down, and then leave them to starve?

Yours very truly,
FREDERICK MILNER in the *Times.*

CARMEN SYLVA.

The Queen Dowager of Roumania who chose for herself the pseudonym of Carmen Sylva, was an amateur in poetry, music, painting, embroidery, and perhaps other arts and crafts. Her literary efforts have been much applauded. As a matter of fact her original verses, at any rate those written in English, are exceedingly poor. It is true that her name is associated with those of Helen Vacaresco and Alma Strettell in the translation of a most wonderfully beautiful volume of Roumanian Folk Songs, entitled "The Bard of the Dimbovitza," but we do not know how much or how little of the work was done by the Queen.

But whatever may have been her literary shortcomings Carmen Sylva, who was a Queen Consort merely, without any power to alter the laws of Roumania, was probably the most satisfactory occupant of any modern throne. She fostered the higher education of Roumanian women. She was a patron of the arts. She wore the Roumanian national dress to encourage peasant industries. She started an embroidery school for women, a nursing sisterhood, and a city for the blind.

Though we may regret the present unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity which produces poverty and gives rise to the need for the lady who is a loaf giver, we must recognise that Carmen Sylva played a worthier part than that of the mere social figure head.

Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases.

The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases has published a report, in which it is stated that there is an unexpectedly large prevalence of these diseases. Sir William Osler places syphilis as fourth amongst the "killing diseases," and the Commissioners estimate that not less than 10 per cent. of the population in large cities is infected with syphilis, acquired or congenital, and that 30 to 50 per cent. of sterility amongst women is due to gonorrhœa.

Emphasis is laid on the loss to the community of working power. It is stated that in 1912, for an average strength of 119,540 men a total number of 269,210 days was lost as a result of venereal disease (an average of 2·25 days per man). In the Army, with a strength of 107,582 there was an average of 593 constantly ill from this cause, and there was a total loss of 216,445 days, an average of 2·1 days per man.

The Commissioners state that—

"If corresponding figures for the civil population could be obtained they would be found to be extremely large, and it must be borne in mind that the civil population has not at present the advantage of easy access to the best modern treatment which has been provided for the Army and Navy."

In reply to these statements of the Commissioners, we most strongly dissent from the view that any comparison can rightly be drawn between the Army and Navy on the one hand, and the civil population on the other. In the first place the segregated and monotonous life of the Army and Navy, the discouragement of marriage by the Military and Naval authorities (clearly shown by the fact that prior to this war only only four per cent. of the Army were allowed to marry on the strength, and to claim allowances for their wives and children), present greater temptations to irregular sexual intercourse than the conditions of ordinary civil life.

Morever, it is a tradition with the Military and Naval Authorities to accept, even to encourage, prostitution.

In civil life prostitution is considered disgraceful, men are ashamed to confess taking a part in it, but the War Office still publishes business-like instructions as to how soldiers may protect themselves from its effects. "The advantage of easy access to the best modern treatment," which the Commissioners state to have been provided for the Army, is by no means an unmixed good, for obviously the authorities, and at least a proportion of the soldiers themselves, have relied on the treatment of disease incurred through vice, rather than on the prevention of risk by the adherence to habits of chastity.

It must not be forgotten that the evil produced by prostitution cannot be measured only by the cases of venereal disease, the mental and moral degradation of the men and women concerned must also be considered. The greatest sufferers are, of course, the women.

The following table showing the recorded death-rate from venereal diseases of men over 15 years in various classes is given in the Report:—

Class.	Social status or occupation	Death-rate per million
1	Upper and Middle	302
2	Intermediate, between 1 and 3	280
3	Skilled labour	264
4	Intermediate, between 3 and 5	304
5	Unskilled labour	429
6	Textile workers	186
7	Miners	177
8	Agricultural labourers ...	108

It will be noticed that the highest rate is amongst men of the "upper and middle classes" and the unskilled labourers in towns. This is exactly what we might expect. The unskilled labourers are the ill-paid and consequently ill-fed and ill-clothed. The rate of disease and death from all causes is naturally high amongst them. In their ranks are to be found the majority of the children of cruelly exploited mothers.

The "upper and middle classes," on the other hand, contain the largest proportion of those leisured persons who sow "wild oats."

The fact that in the "upper and middle classes" there is a higher death-rate from venereal diseases than amongst skilled labourers, miners and textile workers, shows very conclusively that prevention is better than cure, for unquestionably the "upper and middle classes" have the best opportunities of cure.

The Royal Commission does not recommend that there shall be all-round compulsory notification of venereal diseases, because those who are diseased might object. But there is to be more than notification in the case of people who are poor enough to attend the Poor Law infirmaries and other hospitals. Provision is to be made for detaining the inmates of Poor Law institutions whilst the inmates of nursing homes for the well-to-do are merely to have a card of instruction and warning handed to them.

The following passages should be noted:—

"Where a medical officer considers that the local examination of a woman is necessary it should be made by a woman doctor."

"Arrangements should be made through Discharged Prisoners' Aid Associations or similar bodies for some person to keep in touch with discharged prisoners suffering from venereal disease with a view to securing that they avail themselves of treatment and continue the treatment as long as necessary."

It is under the guise of such mildly sounding recommendations that the odious system of State Regulation of Vice may be introduced.

The spread of militarism and the introduction of Conscription in this country must cause us to be on our guard. Everywhere where the military system holds sway and large armies are stationed we find women used as a mere physical convenience, provided by the direct arrangement of the military authorities and registered and examined by military orders.

Already during the war attempts have been made to introduce State Regulation, and now that Conscription has come such attempts will certainly be repeated.

The Commissioners recommend that "men in the Army and Navy suffering from venereal disease whose time has not expired should be detained until they are pronounced not infectious," and that those whose time has expired should be "encouraged" to continue treatment either in a military or civil hospital. This recommendation bears on the statements that are being made as to the numbers of soldiers who have contracted venereal disease abroad during the war. There is a good deal to be said for the view that soldiers—officers and men alike—who are suffering from venereal disease should be prevented from returning to their homes until they are no longer infectious, and for warning both the soldiers and their wives of the probability of a recurrence of the disease, both in themselves and their future offspring, but this is not the recommendation of the Commissioners.

We agree with the Commissioners that the treatment of these diseases should be undertaken by the State and supplied free. This, in our opinion, should apply to all forms of illness.

We also agree with the Commissioners that infectious venereal disease should constitute an incapacity for marriage and a ground of divorce, and that a doctor, parent or friend should be entitled to warn a person about to marry that the other party to the marriage is suffering from such a disease. We also agree that instruction on these matters should be given to young people, though we must emphasise the fact that to raise the economic position of women and to make men responsible for the support of illegitimate children would do more than anything else to abolish the social evil. Though we can agree with some of these latter recommendations of the Commissioners, our distrust of other recommendations remains unabated, and we call to the women of the country to stand on guard.

Everywhere militarism brings with it the same evils. In Australia also the cry that venereal diseases are spreading is being raised. It is said that large numbers of infected soldiers are being sent back from Egypt and that they are imprisoned at Longwarren behind barbed wire entanglements, in order that they may not infect others. A Bill has been introduced into the State Parliament which is meeting with great opposition from the women's organisations. The *Woman Voter* says that Clause 6 of this Bill gives the Government power to suspend the civil rights of any woman in what a Government official may consider to be a case of emergency. "Contacts are required to report themselves and to submit to medical examination." The *Woman Voter* states that all women suspected of living irregular lives may be brought under these provisions. The Australian *Women's Political Association* protests that such provisions "will never be applied impartially"; also that "State Regulation of Vice makes men more reckless." E. S. P.

It is reported that in Hungary the police regulations for prostitutes are to be extended to domestic servants. This entails a compulsory surgical examination monthly. Women will realise the horrible nature of this regulation.

C. M. in *Jus Suffragii* remarks on this: "Even in war time there are some international standards of justice and decency and civilisation left, and the international women's movement should do what it can to maintain them."

IN PARLIAMENT.

The Right of Trial.

On March 2nd, during the debate on the Vote for the Civil Service and Revenue Departments, Mr. Ashley raised the question of the setting aside of the right of an accused person to be tried for that of which he or she is accused. The first Defence of the Realm Act made waste-paper, for the period of the war at least, of the Habeas Corpus Act which secured to all persons in Great Britain the right of trial. The amended Defence of the Realm Act was supposed to restore the right to all British subjects, but the Government has decided that it still has the power to cast into prison and keep there without trial, British subjects of "hostile origin or association," the Government reserving to itself the right to decide whether a person is, or is not, of "hostile association."

During the course of the debate, Mr. Trevelyan asked whether the Government considers that it has also the power to decide to intern or imprison any British subject, whether of hostile origin or association or not. The Attorney General amazingly replied that the Government has the power to keep *anyone* in prison without trial. Why then was the Defence of the Realm Act amended?

Sir William Byles pointed out, as Lord Parmoor has done, that, under the British constitution, Parliament should make the law and the judges should administer it. The present most unconstitutional precedure is that the Cabinet Ministers put forward a draft of the law, Members of Parliament assent to it, and then Ministers administer it as they please, altering it whenever they see fit!

The Home Secretary defended the practice of imprisoning persons without trial by saying that they are frequently suspected of offences of which there is no legal proof. He protested that:

"This is not a case in which the Government seeks to use its powers to suppress opposition to itself, or criticism of itself, which we find dealt with in the course of our constitutional history. These are not domestic opponents of the Government, they are persons of hostile origin or associations."

It may be that in some cases those who have been interned or imprisoned *are* of hostile association, and are *not* domestic opponents of the Government, but we know that there are other cases in which the exact opposite is the fact. A case in point is that of Mr. Peter Petroff, who is a Russian "Revolutionary" (every reformer is called a "Revolutionary" in Russia). He has been active in the Clyde district in opposing the coercive provisions of the Munitions Act and, for this, he is interned without trial!

The Children Sacrificed.

Mr. Whitehouse, Sir James Yoxall and others, complained of the fact that 8,000 children under 14 years of age have been released from school for agricultural or other work. Sir R. Winfrey stated that the rural educationtional authority, of which he is a member, had resolved to allow children of 11 years to leave school, though not a single farmer in the district had accepted the Government's offer of soldiers to work on the land at 4s. a day. He protested that the Government had not only allowed the local authorities, which are largely controlled by farmers who want cheap labour, to break the by-laws fixing the age for leaving school at 14 years, but also the Act of Parliament, which says that no child under 12 may leave school. He urged that instead of addressing letters of remonstrance to the local Education Authorities, the Board of Education should send inspectors down to see that the law is carried out.

By Order of the Farmer.

In the House of Commons, on February 29th, Mr. Parker stated that the Worcestershire Education Committee had passed a resolution requiring head teachers of rural schools to allow children from eleven years of age to absent themselves from school, on the application of any farmer desiring to employ them.

Mr. Henderson said the Board wrote to the local authorities requesting them to reconsider the matter.

"Requests" are ill-placed in serious matters like this. A definite order should be issued prohibiting this Conscription of infants.

WHY NOT THE L.R.S.S.W.?

A Special Sub-Committee to the Statutory Committee for the administration of the Naval and Military War Pensions Act has been appointed.

The following public bodies and societies are represented on it:—Soldiers' and Sailors' Help Society, Officers Families' Association, Admiralty, Army Council, National Health Insurance Joint Committee, Labour Exchanges' Department, Local Government Board, Board of Agriculture, Representatives of Labour in the Co-operative Interest. Why not the League of Rights for Soldiers' and Sailors' Wives and Relatives which has the greatest claim?

WOMEN ABROAD.

The Social Democratic Women of Lower Austria, Bohemia, Tyrol, Upper Austria, Salzburg, and Styria met in Vienna and discussed: "The Working-Women's Movement after the War," "The Organisation of Young Girls," and the necessity of raising the maintenance grants to the wives and children of soldiers.

Mr. Maurice Barrès notifies his intention of introducing a Bill to give the Parliamentary vote to the widows of fallen soldiers, or to their fathers or mothers.

Mme. Jane Misme, whilst stating that feminists will not oppose this project, says it is based on "sentiment rather than reason." We insist that the vote should be granted on the only right and logical principle, that of humanity, we demand a vote for every woman and man of full age.

GIVE THIS PAPER TO A FRIEND.

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

THE
WORKERS' SUFFRAGE FEDERATION,
OBJECTS: To secure the Parliamentary Vote for every Woman and Man over 21, and to promote the Social and Industrial Welfare of the People.
Entrance Fee...1d. Subscription...1d. a Month

BRANCH REPORTS.

BOW.

400 OLD FORD ROAD.
Secretary: MISS LYNCH.

A good meeting was held at Armagh Rd. on Tuesday morning; Mrs. Boyce was the speaker. On Tuesday afternoon Mrs. Walshe gave an interesting address on "The Training of a Nurse." Two new men members were made this week. It is hoped all those men who have helped us so much will join our Federation. We are very grateful to those who distributed bills for the Procession to Tower Hill. We hope they will again help to make the Procession to Holloway on Saturday, the 11th, a success. Members are reminded of the Branch Meeting on the 17th. All nominations for Committee representatives and Branch Hon. Sec. should be sent in as soon as possible.

Dreadnought sales week ending March 4th—1,104. Miss O'Brien 230, Miss Lynch 184, Mrs. Holloway 210, Miss Smyth 81, Miss Kiley 80, Miss Vine 72, Mrs. Farrall 40, Mrs. Savoy 24. Various Sales 149.

BROMLEY.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. MANTLE,
53 St. Leonard Street.

Dreadnought sales—per Mrs. Payne, 80.

POPLAR.

THE WOMEN'S HALL, 20 RAILWAY ST.
Secretary: MRS. DRAKE.

Excellent open-air meetings have been held in Chrisp Street, at which Mrs. Bouvier, Mrs. Boyce and Miss Price were the speakers. Indoor meetings as usual on Tuesday and Friday. Sunday meeting was postponed owing to Demonstration on Tower Hill. This was a great success, and gave credit to the good work of the members, who worked hard during the week—billing, etc. All those who have self-denial cards or boxes should send them in as soon as possible, as we wish to see how much this Branch has collected.

Up to the present we have received for Self Denial—A. Jones 3d., Miss H. Watts 1s. 2d., Mrs. Underwood 6d., Mrs. Seager 6d., Nurse Connolly 4s. 6d., Miss Lizzie Hogger 1s. 2½d., Miss T. Barker 13s. 6½d., Miss P. Lagsding 3s. 10d., Ivy Jones 3d., Miss E. Kiley 2s. 6½d., Tilly Williams 5d., Maud Parish 3s. 4½d., Mrs. Bird 10s. 6d., Ruby Drake 3s. 11½d., Self-Denial Social £1 10s. 5d. Milk Collections—Miss Morley and Miss E. Lagsding 8s. 7½d., Miss H. Watts 9d. Donation at Chandos Hall—J. Maurice 1s.

Dreadnoughts sold week ending Mar. 4th—531. Mrs. Shlette 52, Miss K. Lagsding 81. Mrs. Bird 125.

We have been pleased to welcome four new members this week. Mrs. Cressall and Miss K. Lagsding represented the Federation at the Co-operative Conference held at Southall, 40 papers were sold there.

The next Sunday meeting here will be on March 19th. Admission 2d. Speakers: Mrs. Hercbergova on the "Struggle for Freedom in Poland," and Mr. John Scurr. Music.

LEYTON.

A very successful meeting was held in Mrs. Hart's house at Leyton, on Wednesday, March 1st; eighteen people were present Two new members were enrolled, and several of those present took membership cards home with them. Mrs. Bouvier's speech aroused a great deal of interest, and was followed by an animated discussion. Men and women in Leyton and neighbourhood, wishing to join the Workers' Suffrage Federation, should communicate with the Hon. Sec., Mrs. Hart, 73 Calderon Road, Leyton.

Meetings to elect Branch Representatives for the Committee, and Hon. Secs., will be held at:

WOMAN'S HALL, BOW, Friday 17th, at 8 p.m.
20 RAILWAY STREET, POPLAR, Tuesday 14th, at 8 p.m.
55 FIFE RD., CANNING TOWN, Thursday 9th, at 3.30 p.m.
53 ST. LEONARD ST., BROMLEY, Wednesday 15th, at 3.30 p.m

Members are requested to send in nominations for the Committee to the Branch Secretaries, and for Bromley to 400 Old Ford Road, in order that voting papers can be prepared.

SUNDAY MEETING, BOW WOMEN'S HALL,
400 OLD FORD ROAD,
March 12th, at 7.30 p.m.
(East London Branch of the W.I.L.)

Speakers:—MISS MARSHALL, MR. FRED HUGHES, MRS. CRESSALL.

Chair . . . Miss LYNCH

Clippings of material of all kinds (must measure at least 5 or 6 inches) can be used in our Toy Factory at 45 Norman Rd., Bow, E., and will be most gratefully received if friends will kindly send them.

A MODEL LAUNDRY.—Family work a speciality. Dainty fabrics of every description treated with special care. Flannels and silks washed in distilled water. No chemicals used. Best labour only employed. Prompt collection; prompt delivery.—Bullens, Cressy House Laundry, Reynolds Road, Acton Green, W.

Continued from front page.

made a grant to the General Purposes Fund. Apparently, therefore, the Corps has a semi-official standing. It is to be another of those unrepresentative committees which, with their extraordinary powers, have reduced the vaunted representative British Constitution to nothingness. As might have been expected from the composition of the committee, no word was said as to the necessity for paying the women introduced into agriculture the same wage as the men whom they replace. The 2s. a day and a green armlet already suggested were evidently thought to meet the case so completely that nothing further need be done.

THE BABIES' BENEFIT.

On March 4th, in Bow Baths Hall, Mr. Das Gupta and his company, gave a delightful rendering of two Indian plays in English: "A Caliph for a Day," and "The Maharani of Arakan."

The first has been adapted from the Arabian Nights by Mr. Das Gupta himself. Abou Hassan, who is promised by the real Caliph that he shall take his place for a day, begins by decreeing that the distribution of wealth shall be equalised, that there shall be "home rule" everywhere, and that women shall have an equal share in conducting affairs of State; but his wife appears and soon leads him home.

"The Maharani of Arakan" is an adaption by George Calderon from a story by the great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. Its intention probably is to show that the problem of India cannot be solved by coercion.

Mr. Ali Khan gave fascinating Indian music, accompaning himself on a native instrument.

The proceeds of the entertainment are to be devoted to our Babies' Milk fund. Miss O'Brien, Mr. Whitelock, Mr. Stone, and other members worked tremendously hard in organising the function, and the Federation is greatly indebted to Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, who very kindly arranged for Mr. Das Gupta to come down to us.

UNCHRONICLED EVENTS.

On February 6th, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst spoke for the U.S. in Caxton Hall, Manchester and on Monday, February 7th, for the Kensal Rise I.L.P. at the Co-operative Hall.

On Sunday, Feb. 6th, Mrs. Walker represented our Federation at a Joint Anti-Conscription Meeting with the I.L.P and the N.C.F. at Forest Gate. On Feb. 27th, a similar joint meeting was held in Stratford Broadway, and the Federation was represented by Mrs. Boyce.

On Sunday, Feb. 13th and Monday, Feb. 14th, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst spoke at the Stirchley Institute, the hall being crowded on each occasion. The Sunday meeting was arranged by the Labour Church, and the Monday meeting by the Women's Co-operative Guild. A collection was taken for the E.L.F.S.

Miss Pankhurst also spoke for the W.I.L. at Adam Street, on February 18th, and for the joint meeting of the I.L.P., B.S.P., U.S. and Trade Unions in Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, on March 3rd. This meeting was well reported in the local Press.

Mrs. Walker held the floor for 20 minutes at the Mayor's "Thrift" meeting in Poplar Town Hall, on March 2nd, and silenced all talk of further economies for working women.

Mrs. Cressall and Miss Lagsding represented the Federation at the Co-operative Conference at Southall, on March 4th.

The Ministry of Munitions has removed to Whitehall Place. Hotel Métropole forms part of the new premises.

This will obviate the painful necessity of entertaining deputations to tea in the kitchen!

WANTED.—Country.—Active middle-aged person or widow, to work with daughter and young maid; plain cooking and housework; family—three adults; no late dinners; exceptionally comfortable home; liberal salary.—Mrs. PARR, Wilbye Grange, Near Wellingborough.

GLASGOW CORPORATION AND WOMEN'S LABOUR.

By P. J. DOLLAN.

It is regrettable that such a progressive municipality as Glasgow Corporation has not recognised the value of women's labour by establishing the principle of equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex. Since the war began the Corporation has employed women as car conductors, car cleaners, motor car drivers, stair lamp lighters, gas account and rates collectors in place of the men who have enlisted, and in each department the women have proved themselves efficient and as capable as the men whose situations they now occupy. Yet the reactionaries in the Corporation while admitting the efficiency and capability of the women refuse to pay them men's wages although expecting them to do men's work.

There are almost 1,000 women car conductors and they have been long enough in the service to enable the management to report that they are proving themselves as capable in every way as the men conductors. They work the same hours as the men—51 hours per week; they have early and late duties; and altogether their working conditions approximate to those of the men. In payment, however, there is a difference. The men conductors have a minimum of 29s. and rise automatically to a maximum of 35s.; while the women, for doing the same work, have a minimum of 27s., which after six months' service is increased to 28s.

When the women conductors were first employed they were given the minimum then paid to the men, 27s. per week, and everyone then thought that the women while they continued in the service would receive the same increments as the men. The men's minimum has since been increased by 2s. Thus a man starting as a conductor gets a minimum of 29s. a week while a woman gets 27s.

The Labour members have attempted to induce the Corporation to pay the women the same wages as the men, but without success. The reactionaries voted down the proposal for equal wages mainly on the ground that as there were 10,000 women applicants for posts as women conductors there was no need to pay a higher wage than 27s.! Obviously if the reactionaries are allowed to maintain their attitude towards women labour without an effective protest being made, it is certain they will use women labour to lower wages at the end of the war when employment is scarce. That would undoubtedly lead to a sex war between the women and the conductors who will return from the European war to find their standard of living lowered by the cheaper labour of women.

In other departments we find the same exploitation of women's labour. Thus women chauffeurs earn 27s. a week when doing the work of men who got from 34s. to 38s. a week. As car cleaners women receive 27s. as against the rates, ranging from 29s. to 32s., paid to the men for the same work. These facts indicate plainly that women are denied the male value of their labour and unfortunately they seem to be content with the denial. This is lamentable at a time when women workers have the opportunity of a century in which, to assert their right to have "men's pay for men's work." If the same apathy is continued until the war ends, then the women will have the unholy satisfaction of knowing that, under the pretext of assisting the nation, they have helped to lower wages. For, if the Corporation can get women to do the work after the War for 27s. a week it is not likely they will offer 29s. to 38s. to men for the same services. *Already reactionaries have been heard to say that at the end of the war they will support the retention of women, because they can get their labour cheaper than that of men.*

Surely the women of Glasgow will not allow their sex to be exploited in that fashion for it would not only be detrimental to the status of women, but also extremely detrimental to the status of the working class! The women, in co-operation with the men, can prevent the exploitation of their sex; and the time to prevent exploitation is now. The women employees of the Corporation want a lead on this question and there are sufficient women rebels in Glasgow to give them the right lead. The women who compelled the most capitalistic Government of modern times to prevent houseowners from raising rents during the war can also prevent Glasgow Corporation exploiting women labour during the war. By enforcing the principle of equal pay for equal work in Glasgow Corporation employment, the women will forge a lever that will be of use to them in wresting the same right from other municipal and public bodies throughout the country.

Therefore we appeal to the rebel women of Glasgow* to make this question their own during the next few weeks, and, by raising a popular clamour compel the Corporation to give way. An educational campaign should be started among the women employees who are not yet organised; the citizens should be aroused at indoor and outdoor meetings, as was done during the rent agitation; while processions and deputations to the Council Chambers would not be out of place. If the women will take up that work now and continue at it for the next few weeks, they will assure a majority for the following motion, which has been put down by the Labour Party, when it comes before the Council. The motion reads:—

"That in all cases of women at present employed, or who may be employed in future by the Corporation, to perform duties previously performed by men, the rate of wages shall be not less in amount, and the conditions of employment not less advantageous, than the wages and conditions which would obtain if men were employed, and that this resolution apply to all the departments of the Corporation."

The adoption of that proposal will be a great victory for women workers, and on that account it is worth striving for. But the striving must begin now.

[*The same appeal should be made to women all over the country, for equal pay is necessary everywhere.—Editor WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT.]

On Sunday, March 5th, the Workers' Suffrage Federation organised a fine Demonstration on Tower Hill, to demand the release of Mrs. Nellie Best. A procession marched from 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, to Tower Hill. The speakers were:—Mrs. Boyce, Mrs. Bouvier, Mr. Bracher, Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Drake, Mrs. Hobhouse, Miss Sylvia Pankurst, Mrs. Leigh Rothwell, Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky, and Mrs. Walker.

The resolution calling for the immediate release of Mrs. Best was carried with one dissentient, by a large and enthusiastic crowd.

It was resolved to organise a procession to Holloway next Saturday, to start from King's Cross, corner of Chesterfield Street and Euston Road, at 4 p.m.

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